

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment after final Office Action. Applicants did not make these amendments earlier because we believed the previous amendments were sufficient. Applicants have further amended the claims to better define the invention.

Claims 1-2, 4-12 and 14-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Gilbert et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,795,530) in view of Culli et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,304,641). Applicants respectfully traverse.

The embodiment of Culli et al. discloses a call forwarding system for an advanced intelligent network telecommunications environment. A calling party places a call which attempts to contact the destination by dialing an old telephone number of the called party. Upon recognizing that the calling party has called a telephone number which has been changed, the call is forwarded with a three digit code to a hub switch. The hub switch recognizes the three digit code, and determines the new telephone number and whether the destination has elected to pay for forwarding the call to the new telephone number. The system can also determine whether the calling party has elected to pay for forwarding the call to the new telephone number. See Col. 5, ll. 20-25. The call is completed if either the called party or the calling party has elected to pay for forwarding the call. The embodiment of Culli et al. does not disclose or suggest a system for allowing a called party to share their new number with some selected people, while keeping the new number a secret from other selected people.

Gilbert et al. discloses a system and method for providing customized announcements to callers based on the called party telephone number and the calling party telephone number. See Abstract. When an incoming call is answered by a personal communications service, the system checks a database to see whether or not the subscriber has identified that calling party number as a number that receives a personalized greeting. If the calling party number is in the database, the system plays the specific greeting selected by the subscriber for that specific caller or group of callers. Otherwise the system plays a default greeting to the caller.

Claims 1, 11 and 21 as amended recite, among other things, that “a telephone number of a calling party that attempts to call a disconnected telephone number of the called party” is determined. A “first announcement to the calling party” is provided “only if the calling party is authorized by the called party to receive the first announcement.”

The Office Action is correct that Gilbert does not teach that a telephone number of a called party is a disconnected number. See OA page 3. The Office Action is incorrect, however, that it would have been obvious to incorporate the features of Culli et al. with the system of Gilbert et al. It would not have been obvious to combine the two systems. The system of Culli et al. discloses an embodiment for allowing a calling party or a called party to pay to have calls directed to a disconnected number forwarded to a new number. The embodiment of Culli et al. does not disclose that the called party can determine whether a called party is authorized to learn of the new number, such as with a specialized announcement. Moreover, Gilbert et al. does not teach using the customized announcement system with disconnected number. Therefore, there would have been no motivation to combine the customized announcement system of Gilbert et al. with the call forwarding system of Culli et al. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to the claims be withdrawn.

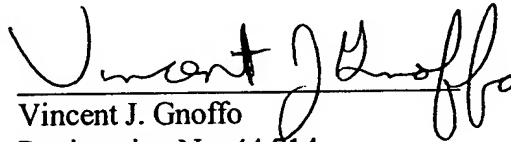
Claims 2 and 4-10 depend from claim 1, claims 12 and 14-20 depend from claim 11 and claims 22-24 depend from claim 21, either directly or indirectly, and therefore include all of the features of their respective dependent claims, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with regard to claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to these claims also be withdrawn.

Moreover, claims 10 and 20 have been amended to recite that a call log is provided for the disconnected telephone number to the called party. None of the references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest such a call log for a disconnected number. For at least this additional reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claims 10 and 20 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

For at least the above-identified reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the application be allowed. If for any reason, the Examiner believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, she is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys at (312) 321-4200.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vincent J. Gnoffo", written over a horizontal line.

Vincent J. Gnoffo
Registration No. 44,714
Attorney for Applicant

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. BOX 10395
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610
(312) 321-4200